



News Release

For immediate release: December 20, 2012

(12-184)

Contacts: [Carolyn Cox](#), Office of Drinking Water
[Kate Lynch](#), Communications Office

360-236-3162

360-236-4072

Cowlitz County: State extends boil water advisory for Carrolls Water

E.coli bacteria found in one of the community's wells

OLYMPIA — The state Department of Health alerted Carrolls Water Association customers today that one of their wells contains potentially harmful *E. coli* bacteria.

The small community in southeast Cowlitz County has been under a boil-water advisory since Tuesday because of low water pressure. Detecting *E. coli* in one of the wells makes it doubly important that residents boil their tap water before drinking it. The state is also asking residents to continue to conserve water.

E. coli can cause short-term illness, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea and headaches. It poses special health risks for infants, young children, and people with very weak immune systems.

The water system is currently operating on three wells and serves 176 homes, an elementary school, and a country store. A fourth well stopped producing water on Monday, causing one of the water system's two reservoirs to drain.

“Until we have more information about what’s causing the contamination and low pressure problems, we don’t know how long this health advisory will last,” said Denise Clifford, director of the agency’s Office of Drinking Water. “We’re continuing to investigate, and we’ll help the system as much as possible. The first priority, however, is protecting people’s health.”

Residents should boil all tap water used for drinking, brushing teeth, preparing food, washing dishes, and making ice. The agency recommends heating the water to a brisk boil for one minute, then allowing the water to cool before using.

Carrolls Elementary School has been using bottled water and hand-washing stations since Tuesday. The school closes for the winter holidays on Friday at the end of classes.

The Department of Health directed the water system operator to install emergency chlorination on the infected well, and collect more water samples.

Carrolls Water Association customers who have questions about their water should call Columbia Technical LLC at 360-281-2650.

The [Department of Health website](http://doh.wa.gov) (doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

###